

REMARKS

Favorable consideration and allowance of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 are currently pending.

In the present Official Action, Claims 1-4, 9-14 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Kerr (US Patent Publication No. 2005/0043096)(hereinafter Kerr) in view of the newly cited reference to Hofi (US Patent Publication No. 2003/0074317)(hereinafter Hofi). Further, Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Kerr in view of Cox et al (US 5,696,964) (hereinafter Cox).

Furthermore, in the present office action, Claims 7-8 and 15-16 were indicated as comprising allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner is respectfully thanked for such indication of allowable subject matter.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 1-4, 9-14 and 17-20, Applicants respectfully cancel Claim 1 and Claim 5, and wholly incorporate the subject matter thereof in amended Claim 7, now re-cast in independent form. Likewise, the canceled subject matter of Claim 1 is being wholly incorporated in amended Claim 8, now re-cast in independent form. Claims 7 and 8 have been indicated as comprising allowable subject matter and it is respectfully requested that amended independent Claims 7 and 8 proceed to allowance.

In light of the cancellation of Claim 1 and 5, Claims 2-4, 6 and 9 are being amended to change their dependency.

Further in the response, Applicants respectfully cancel Claim 11, and wholly incorporate the subject matter thereof in amended Claim 15, now re-cast in independent form.

Likewise, the canceled subject matter of Claim 11 is being wholly incorporated in amended Claim 16, now re-cast in independent form. Claims 15 and 16 have been indicated as comprising allowable subject matter and it is respectfully requested that amended independent Claims 15 and 16 proceed to allowance.

In light of the cancellation of Claim 11, Claim 17 is being amended to change its dependency.

Claims 18 to 20 are being canceled herein without prejudice.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference might expedite prosecution of this case, it is respectfully requested that he call applicant's attorney at (516) 742-4343.

Respectfully submitted,



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